

A KALEIDOSCOPE OF JUSTICE. *By John H. Wigmore.*
Washington Law Book Co., Washington, D. C. 1941.

In his "Panorama of the World's Legal Systems" Dean Wigmore aroused the interest of lawyers and students of law in legal systems outside their own. By the abundant use of pictures he immeasurably enlivened "dry legal history" In this new volume he has by stories, "authentic accounts of trial scenes," presented with equal skill the many devices with which man in times past has attempted to achieve justice through trials. No attempt is made at scientific research but rather the book is intended to furnish "informational entertainment".

There are of course no court records of these trials and, therefore, the story is told, often by an onlooker, not infrequently by the party on trial, sometimes it is traditional folk lore, but a doubt as to its authenticity will rarely arise in the mind of the reader. They are selected from every continent and from the islands of the seas, from ancient down to fairly recent times. Through them the reader will gain definite impressions of the people of the time and country involved, their kind of legal institutions and government, the sort of society they had. He will also be impressed I think with the marked similarity of the techniques utilized in primitive attempts at justice,—the common use of ordeal, the prominent place of religion in this primitive trial, the slow progress toward better fact finding devices with opportunity for hearing, for presentation of proof and fairness in the triers. Each story usually manifests an earnest though primitive attempt at justice.

At the end of the book will be found an epilogue which the reader would gain by reading both before and after the stories. In it is a statement of the evolution of trial, its methods and policy If read before it will make the material more meaningful, if read in regular order it will give a good summation. In any event the reader who takes up this book has in store profitable entertainment.

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